Canadian Film Weekly
VOICE of the CANADIAN MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

Vol. 8, No. 51 TORONTO, DECEMBER 15, 1943 $2.00 Per Annum

Cut in Music Fees Suggested

Should Be Sliced to 70 Per Cent Of Present Total, Is Claim

A basic over-all tariff for music fees in Canada should be fixed by the Copyright Appeal Board which should not exceed the present annual royalties total, the Musical Protective Society contends in its objections to payment of fees to the American Performing Right Society. Wartime restrictions of all kinds have interfered with commercial enterprises which use music — grounds for a decrease rather than an increase of fees.

Spokesmen for the Musical Protective Society suggest that, because businesses are permitted to retain only 70 per cent of average profits these days, the royalties'

(Continued on Page 2)

Dave Seigel Heads Local 173, IATSE

David Seigel, veteran projectionist, defeated Sam Wells for the presidency of Local 173 (Toronto) of the IATSE at the elections held on December 5th at the Labor Temple, Toronto. He is the third president in three years. Last year Sam Wells unseated Arthur

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Warners Announce Six French Pictures

Following the unprecedented success of the test engagement of "Le Ciel et Toi" (French-language version of "All This and Heaven Too") at the Capitol Theatre, Quebec, announcement is made by Wolfe Cohen, Canadian general manager for Warner Bros., that

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Patterson Manages Royal, North Bay

Doug Patterson, for ten years manager of the Regent Theatre, Creighton Mines, has arrived in North Bay to succeed John S. Kurk as manager of the Royal Theatre. Temporarily transferred to the Grand Theatre, Sudbury, Kurk has taken over the management of the Regent Theatre in that city.

RKO Suing Time Inc. To Stop New Short

Suit filed in Federal Court, New York, recently, by RKO Radio Pictures seeks an injunction to restrain Time, Inc. from releasing "U.S. Music and the War," new March of Time film in which Frank Sinatra assertedly appears singing at a WAVE's training station.

RKO charges that release of the short will hurt the box-office chances of its new film "Higher and Higher," which stars Sinatra.

R. W. BOLSTAD

Newly-elected chairman of the Motion Picture Branch of the Toronto Board of Trade. He succeeds Louis Rosenfeld.

Toronto Warner Club Elects New Officers

Recent meeting of the Warner Club of the Toronto branch of Vitagraph, Limited, elected the following officers, George Altman, president; Theresa Mancino, secretary; Rose Grossman, treasurer; W. McGuire, entertainment; Mary Quinlan, welfare; Eva Cohen, membership; and J. Plottel, funds and contributions.

Walter Ross Passes

Walter Ross, former superintendent of the Imperial Theatre, Toronto, passed away last week in Toronto. He was the father-in-law of Ernie Rawley, manager of the Royal Alexandra Theatre.

Heralds, Etc., Out Under Order 332

Heralds and programs are banned from use by theatres in an interpretation of Order No. 332 of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. Representatives of distributors and exhibitors conferred with John Atkins, administrator of Publishing, Printing and Allied industries

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Nathanson Will Is Probated

Nathan L. Nathanson, outstanding figure in the Canadian motion picture industry at the time of his death late in May, left an estate with a gross value of $3,536,207. The will was probated by the Montreal Trust Company, Toronto. The estate is made up of $158,-

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Inquest Jury Issues Puzzling Decision

Though the jury on the inquest of Herbert Naiman, projectionist who died after being rescued from the Film Exchange Building fire, agreed that the origin of the trouble was unknown, its verdict was puzzling. The fire, according to the jury, was caused by "marked negligence in not carrying out Sections 72A and 72B of the Ontario Theatres and Cinematograph Act by allowing a quantity of naked films to be stored in the vaults of Regal Films Corporation."

But the Theatres and Cinematographs Act of the Province of Ontario designates 72A as applying to revising rooms, not vaults. According to 72A "All films, except reels in actual process of revision shall be kept in approved shipping cases or in metal film cabinets and such cabinets shall

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Ladysmith, BC, House On Odeon Circuit

Odeon Theatres of Canada has purchased the Rio Theatre, Ladysmith, B.C., from James Haworth, according to an announcement made by Haskell M. Masters.

Mrs. Delaney Elected

Mrs. Eva Delaney, manager and owner of the Delaney Theatre, Gananoque, Ontario, last week became the first woman to hold a councillor's position, following a hotly contested Gananoque town council election.

'Hands Across the Border' The first ROY ROGERS feature for 1943-44 already receiving raves from everywhere. Big in action—excitement—music—songs and production values. A Republic picture from EMPIRE-UNIVERSAL.

Film Weekly

Vol. 8, No. 51 Dec. 15, 1943

HYE BOSSIN, Managing Editor

Address all communications—The Managing Editor, Canadian Film Weekly, 25 Dundas Square, Toronto 1, Canada.

Published by Film Publications of Canada, Ltd., 25 Dundas Square, Toronto, Ont., Canada. Phone ADelaide 4317. Price 5 cents each or $2.00 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter

Regional, Eh?

We were proud to read the other day of Sir Arthur Lane Beit telling the British House of Commons that "Canada will finish the war with the world's fourth largest air force, if not the fourth armed power, and it is quite clear she must be prepared to take her share of responsibility in maintaining the peace of the Atlantic and Pacific."

This is one of the many expressions that prove people everywhere are realizing that Canada has come of age. Of some 35 United Nations, Canada, with a population of less than 12,000,000, has been ranked as fourth or fifth in war effort.

But there are Canadians and Americans who haven't yet realized that Canada has reached nationhood. These are the men who represent American business interests here. To them Canada is "regional." That word "regional," used to explain to us that Canada is fed its advertising through American national magazines, has often irked us. Of what are we regional? Surely not the United States.

Yet there are men who are used to thinking of Canada that way simply because, for purposes of the distribution of goods and gathering of revenue, we are considered to be part of a region which includes various American states. That may be good business but let us not forget that Canada is a geographical, cultural and national entity. And it should be treated that way. Canadians like to express themselves in their own way through their own mediums.

Let us forget that "regional" business or limit it to its proper sphere.

Important Event

The last week of November saw one of the most interesting experiments in Canadian motion picture history, the showing of a Hollywood-made French language film before a Quebec audience. The film was "Le Ciel et Toi," none other than "All This and Heaven Too" and it was a tremendous success at the Capitol Theatre, Quebec City, where 25,000 French-Canadians came to see it in a week. The first try having been a success, more films will follow.

Warners' had the film dubbed in the French language in such a way that the voices synchronize almost perfectly with the lip movements of Bette Davis and other players. Charles Boyer's own voice is heard in the film.

"Le Ciel et Toi" was the first of a number of films being prepared by the studio for the day when France will be freed.

Films of this type will mean a great deal to the future unity of Canada. Imported French films have expressed the ideas of the Old World and Hollywood product was hindered in its good intentions by the language barrier.

The coming of films to Quebec, each of which makes plain modern ideas that have value in spreading general understanding, is an event of importance. Nor must it be forgotten that our French-speaking fellow-Canadians can now get the same pleasure from motion pictures as English-speaking peoples, for whom they are primarily made.

Suggest Cut in Music Royalties

(Continued from Page 1)

collection societies should have their rates reduced so that they will receive no more than 70 per cent of former over-all rates.

Granting of a license to the American Peforming Right Society after the Ottawa hearing before the Copyright Appeal Board will not be opposed by the Musical Protective Society if the APRS can show a substantial repertoire. But, if such a license is granted, the Canadian Performing Right Society should reduce its fees, according to the position of those who pay royalties.

Those music organizations which will be represented in Canada by the American Performing Right Society were formerly represented by the Canadian Performing Right Society, which is an Ascap unit. The move to open a new collection agency resulted when Ascap and the Peer organization split. The Peer organization is sponsor of the APRS. Unless the CPRS reduces its rates to correspond with the APRS take, the exhibitor will have an increased music bill.

Without a corresponding decrease, there would be a breach of the spirit of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board policy of maintaining the price ceiling.

Present rates were based on the premise that but one collection society was operating in the field.

The hearing takes place on January 6th. The firm of McMaster, Montgomery, Fleury & Co., are representing the Musical Protective Society. Norman S. Robertson, K.C., will present the arguments before the Copyright Appeal Board.

DAVID SEIGEL

Newly-elected president of Local 173 (Toronto) of the IATSE, largest branch of that organization in Canada.

Inquest Verdict Given by Jury

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not have a capacity exceeding fifty reels of film."

There was no evidence to show that 72A had been violated—if it applies to revising rooms.

It is Section 71A, Sections A, B, C and D which applies to vaults, according to the book of regulations. None of the sections makes any mention of how film is to be packed in vaults. There is no rule shown which forbids naked films to be stored in vaults.

Again, in the case of 72B, which is designated as applying to film cuttings, there is a question as to whether Regal's conduct was outside the regulations.

Says 72B: "All film scraps or cuttings from film shall be deposited in a covered metal receptacle kept at least one-half filled with water which shall be emptied daily and all film departments shall be cleared of all waste paper or similar inflammable debris daily."

Winslow Brown, in charge of Regal's supply department, testified that this had been adhered to.

There were three barrels and two boxes of junked film outside the vaults but these did not contain scraps or cuttings from revision. They contained rolls of discarded films—not scraps or cuttings—awaiting shipment to Canadian Kodak and acceptable for transporting while packed in that fashion.

The films in the barrels and boxes and 600 naked reels in the vault were not damaged during the fire.

Though Carl Caskey, Provincial deputy fire marshal, couldn't form an opinion as to the origin of the fire he believed that it would not have occurred if containers had been used. He said that "some one was in No. 1 vault prior to our arrival on the morning of the fire and something was taken out." Dorothy Wilson of Regal, questioned on the possibility of anyone entering the vault, testified that the key to the vault had been locked in her desk and given to the fire marshal. She did not think that any unauthorized person had entered the vault.

The jury recommended that film exchanges and distributing agencies be placed in buildings of one and not more than two storey buildings. These buildings should not contain other offices or projection rooms and should be located outside the municipal limits.

Chief Coroner Lawson commented during the proceedings that only 11 film exchanges in the United States are not in buildings of one or two storeys.

The verdict called for more stringent and frequent inspection.

THE PICK OF THE PICTURES

Canadian Film Weekly
VOICE of the CANADIAN MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

REVIEWS INFORMATION RATINGS

Vol. 8, No. 51 REVIEWS FROM FILM DAILY, NEW YORK December 15, 1943

'What's Buzzin' Cousin'

with Ann Miller, Rochester, John Hubbard
Columbia 75 Mins.

FREDDY MARTIN HELPS BOLSTER BOX OFFICE POSSIBILITIES OF THIS COMEDY; MILLER, ROCHESTER ALSO GOOD.

"What's Buzzin' Cousin?" isn't the hepcat stuff that its title suggests, although there are a couple of strains of hot music. The title, in fact, is absolutely meaningless in this instance.

The exhibitor will have to look to Ann Miller, Eddie Anderson (Rochester) and Freddy Martin and his orchestra for the audience appeal of this film, a mild comedy with none-to-strong a story. Miss Miller regales the customers with several peppy dance numbers. Rochester deals out some comedy which, while not exactly new, manages to squeeze a fair number of laughs out of the patrons. But perhaps the strongest attraction of all is Martin. The baton wielder floods the film with melody in a wide variety of musical offerings topped by his own swing arrangement of Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody, one of the film's high moments. The Martin aggregation has 10 tunes to play around with.

The yarn has a quartet of chorines trying to make a go of a hotel in a deserted town. The place has been inherited by Miss Miller. Upon the scene come the Martin boys with Rochester and John Hubbard, a vocalist. The place is turned into a night club at Hubbard's suggestion, but it's no go until a gold rush starts as a result of Rochester's misplaced bridgework. Subsequently the joint is sold by the chorines to a group of racketeers at a fat profit. The romance is taken care of by Hubbard and Miss Miller.

Jack Fier produced and Charles Barton contributed lively direction. Harry Sauber is responsible for the screenplay, which is based on a yarn by Aben Kandel.

CAST: Ann Miller, Eddie Anderson (Rochester), John Hubbard, Freddy Martin, Leslie Brooks, Jeff Donnell, Carol Hughes, Theresa Harris, Roy Gordon, Bradley Page, Warren Ashe, Dub Taylor, Betsy Gay, Louis Mason.

DIRECTION, Okay. PHOTOGRAPHY, Okay.

Margaret O'Brien Gets Mag Award

Six year old star Margaret O'Brien was recently selected by Parents' Magazine as the fifth recipient of its annual award to the most talented motion picture juvenile of the year.

'Crazy House'

with Ole Olsen, Chic Johnson
Universal 80 Mins.

OLSEN, JOHNSON GO BERSERK IN FURIOUS COMEDY PACKED WITH MUSIC AND SPECIALTIES; SWELL POPULAR DIVERSION.

No film could have been more aptly named than this. The title prepares one for as insane an exhibition of funmaking as is humanly conceivable. Those who relish wild and uninhibited diversion will get more than their money's worth as Ole Olsen and Chic Johnson uncork all their tricks, putting on a breathless slam-bang show that doesn't slow up for a second. Nothing in the film makes sense, which is as it should be, considering the type of comics the Olsen-Johnson boys are. The film is corn pure and simple and makes no pretense at being anything else. Accepted as such, it should prove an excellent means of relaxation.

Practically every available performer on the Universal lot has been pressed into service to garnish this dish of mad hilarity. Helping Olsen and Johnson to make "Crazy House" solid entertainment are a number of guest stars topped by Allan Jones, Leo Carrillo, Robert Paige, Andy Devine and Alan Curtis. Brief appearances by these are augmented by an endless parade of specialities by the DeMarcos, Marion Hutton and the Glenn Miller Singers, the Chandra Kaley Dancers, the Delta Rhythm Boys and many, many others, all to the taste of the avid filmgoers, who will find two bands, Count Basie's and Leighton Noble's, as added magnets.

The songs are many and as down to earth as the comedy.

The furious capers of the Olsen and Johnson duo revolve around their efforts to make a picture of their own after they are let out by their studio because of their maddening antics. Their search for talent provides a logical means of introducing most of the speciality numbers.

The plot of the film is worked out by a cast loaded with comedy purveyors. Besides Olsen and Johnson there are Percy Kilbride, Edgar Kennedy, Franklin Pangborn, Billy Gilbert, Shemp Howard, not to mention Cass Daley, who makes a mighty hit by her screwball behavior.

Practically the only straight roles are played by Patric Knowles as the director of the Olsen-Johnson production and Martha O'Driscoll as a carhop who is "discovered" by him.

CAST: Ole Olsen, Chic Johnson, Martha O'Driscoll, Patric Knowles, Cass Daley, Percy Kilbride, Leighton Noble, Thomas Gomez, Edgar Kennedy, Andrew Tombes, Ray Walker, Robert Emmet Keane, Franklin Pangborn, Chester Clute, Billy Gilbert, Richard Lane, Hans Conreid, Shemp Howard, Fred Sanborn, Alan Curtis, Leo Carrillo, Allan Jones, Robert Paige, Grace McDonald, Lon Chaney, Andy Devine, the DeMarcos, Marion Hutton and Glenn Miller Singers, Chandra Kaley Dancers, Laison Brothers, the Five Hertzogs, Bobby Brooks, Ward and Van, Terry Sheldon, Harry Powers, Billy Reed, Count Basie and his band, Delta Rhythm Boys.

DIRECTION, Good. PHOTOGRAPHY, Good.

'Paris After Dark'

with George Sanders, Philip Dorn, Brenda Marshall
20th-Fox 85 Mins.

FAMILIAR YARN ABOUT UNDERGROUND MANAGES TO SQUEEZE THROUGH THANKS TO ACTING AND MOMENTS OF SUSPENSE.

"Paris After Dark" is another addition to the list of pictures about the underground movement in the lands conquered by Hitler. This latest rehash of the story turns out to be an undistinguished film hewing pretty closely to formula. A number of good performances and a certain amount of excitement and suspense redeem the production and set it down as fairly acceptable entertainment for those who have not tired of films on the subject exploited by this 20th-Fox offering.

The action deals with a sabotage organization operating in Paris. At its head is an aristocrat surgeon (George Sanders) who is aided by his assistant (Brenda Marshall) and her husband (Philip Dorn), fresh from a German prison camp. The latter, his days numbered as a result of brutal treatment at the hands of the Nazis, does not volunteer his services until the murder of his youthful brother-in-law (Raymond Roe).

The performances for the most part are on the credit side. Philip Dorn and Miss Marshall play with an earnestness that overshadows the work of Sanders, who, however, gives a good account of himself as the surgeon, even though there seems little of the Frenchman in his performance.

CAST: George Sanders, Philip Dorn, Brenda Marshall, Madeleine LeBeau, Marcel Dalio, Robert Lewis, Henry Rowland, Raymond Roe, Gene Gary, Jean Del Val, Curt Bois, Anne Codee, Louis Borell, John Wengraf, Michael Visaroff, Frank Lyon.

DIRECTION, Routine. PHOTOGRAPHY, Okay.

'Riding High'

with Dorothy Lamour, Dick Powell, Victor Moore
Paramount 89 Mins.

MARK THIS MUSICAL ATTRACTION DOWN AS ACE POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT HEADED FOR HEAVY TAKES.

Entertainment in the popular vein rides high in this Technicolor beauty from the Paramount studios. Love, laughter and music make "Riding High" a combination that will gallop home with plenty of dough. The picture's marquee strength double-checks the box office success of the production.

Walter DeLeon, Arthur Phillips and Art Arthur have turned a play by James Montgomery into a breezy comedy that often suffers delightful fits of insanity. The chief fault with the script is that it drags out several sequences beyond reason. Except for one or two such spots, the film is generally a fast-stepping musical show.

Set against a Southwestern background that gives it tremendous eye appeal and produced richly by Associated Producer Fred Kohlmar, the show depicts the efforts of Dick Powell, a mining engineer, to obtain financing to make a success of a silver mine owned by Dorothy Lamour's pop. Victor Moore, a counterfeiter, plays Santa Claus by supplying Powell with phoney dough with which to attract legitimate money. This gets Powell innocently involved with the law. Most of the action has to do with a cat-and-mouse game between the sheriff and Powell and Moore. Everything is worked out satisfactorily in a slam-bang finish. The film would not be complete without a romantic tie-up between Miss Lamour and Powell.

Under the skillful direction of George Marshall, Miss Lamour appears to good advantage as an entertainer at the dude ranch where the story is laid. Powell carries the assignment opposite her acceptably. Credit for most of the fun goes to Moore. The picture owes a lot to Cass Daley, screwball comedienne, who proves a sensation as the owner of the dude ranch. Every time she appears the show perks up amazingly. Gil Lamb's work as the sheriff adds heavily to the laughs.

CAST: Dorothy Lamour, Dick Powell, Victor Moore, Gil Lamb, Cass Daley, Milt Britton and band, Bill Goodwin, Rod Cameron, Glen Langan, Louise La Planche, Marie McDonald, Andrew Tombes, Douglas Fowley, Tim Ryan, Pierre Watkin, Stanley Pine, Dwight Butcher, Lane Chandler, James Flavin, Charles R. Moore, William Edwards, James Burke.

DIRECTION, Good. PHOTOGRAPHY, Aces.

MONOGRAM PC PICTURES

OF CANADA LTD.
277 Victoria Street,
Toronto.

★

SHH-HH!

DON'T TELL ANYONE THAT—

Women In Bondage

Starring

GAIL PATRICK
NANCY KELLY

★

SHOWS THE TRUTH ABOUT—

The destruction of morality and womanhood under the Nazi New Order.

Secret Service regulations dictate to German soldiers whom to love.

Nazi baptism of babies under military sword and Hitler's Mein Kampf.

German women directing British Bombers with light signals to pummel Nazi factories.

Wins Critics' Praise in

Daily Variety

Motion Picture Herald

Showmen's Trade Review

True ···

Because it is produced from Eye-Witness Accounts.

★

The new "big name" company in the industry.

MONOGRAM PICTURES

Toronto, Montreal, St. John, Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver.

He Knew What They Wanted (?)

The almost severe manpower situation in theatres has caused help hirers to forget qualifications and take what they can get when they can get it.

Each theatre has a novel story or two about the help. The other day a manager noticed an usher putting his shoes on.

"My feet hurt," the usher explained, "so I took my shoes off."

He had been walking around the place in his socks all evening.

But an even better story is about the de luxe house with a deaf and dumb usher.

Naturally, the patrons ask him such common questions as "What time is it?" or "Where do I go to exchange these tickets for loges" and so on.

The usher, in spite of his handicap, answers all questions—but in the same way.

If a man asks a question, the usher points to the men's room. Ladies are directed to the powder room.

An irksome mystery the other night was the complaint of the soldier who said he had left a bottle of whiskey in his great-coat, which he left in the checkroom. The whiskey, he insisted, was missing. He probably drank it before going to the theatre, the stuff having induced forgetfulness.

* * *

For Your Scrap Book

The vague thing called showmanship takes many forms and its use does not imply a cheapening of standards. Showmanship is possible in the pulpit, too, even when dignity is the first rule.

I enjoyed reading part of a sermon by Rev. George E. Trimble in Fairlawn United Church. Perhaps you would like it for your scrap book or wallet. His text was St. Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians that they should be "living epistles, written not with ink, but upon the tablets of the human heart, which are known and read of all men."

"Christians should be living newspapers," he said. "Men read us like a book. They read us as they read a newspaper. What are we headlining in our lives? Deeds of kindness, a gift to the blood bank, a cup of cold water to some underprivileged child, a hearty handclasp to a blinded veteran, good news—or a bit of scandal? Will our generosity this Christmas make necessary an 'extra'?

"Each of us is an editor. The editorial columns of a daily reveal the editor—whether he is broad, tolerant, global-minded, or narrow, bigoted and selfish. Now and again we meet an editor suffering from astigmatism—a blind spot. There is a blur in his thinking which he may even mistake for wisdom. In the great questions of the day—war, peace, politics, education, socialism, capitalism—can you see clearly, think clearly? For as a man thinketh, so is he. We need have no fear if this mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus.

"In the sport section of your life have you learned to play? It isn't time or wasted money. Get in the game. In these days of tension we need recreation. The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Make it strong and beautiful.

"Turn to the business section of your life. No longer is it 'business is business' or 'the public be damned.' There is a new philosophy—'the public be served.' To use men to make money, instead of using money to make men, is not business. It is brutality.

"Have you left out the comic strip from your life? Can you laugh at the antics of Napoleon, the Bumsteads, Jiggs and Orphan Annie? When the tensions of life are taut and we are tied up in knots, a rich, ringing laugh lightens the strain, lifts the load and sweetens the air. Perhaps your greatest need is to laugh at yourself.

"The last page of the paper is usually advertising. We have learned that it pays to advertise. Business believes in slogans. St. Paul believed in slogans—'To live is Christ, to die is gain.' Wesley had a slogan—'The world is my parish.' What is yours? What are you advertising?"

* * *

Life On the Road

A man must make sacrifices for his art—or his Artists, providing they are United. A UA checker found that out the other day.

Said checker checked into the Queen's Theatre, Hespeler, Ontario, to click off the customers to "Stage Door Canteen." But he had no place to sleep. Exhibitor Jack Melzer tried here for him, there for him but without avail.

Until he got a bright idea and solved the problem. He phoned the Chief of Police who allowed the checker to break into jail and stay overnight!

Heralds, Etc., Out Under Order 332

(Continued from Page 1)

with a view to determining what leeway there was under the order.

Nothing can be created for use beyond the theatre premises which might be displayed anywhere but on a travelling conveyance or as a 24-sheet.

They were told that in areas where there is no newspaper or where insufficient means of public communication exist, an exhibitor could state his difficulties and apply for a permit to continue in some measure his accustomed advertising practices.

Though there is no restriction on importing material, distribution is restricted under the order. Poster departments of exchanges have considerable stock on hand and it is expected that allowances will be worked out for distribution of such material. Those seeking permits must provide data of supplies on hand and orders filed. Press books are regarded as catalogues and thus remain unaffected.

The exhibitor's channels of advertising are now his premises, newspapers, radio, 24-sheets and public conveyances.

An equivalent order will be issued in the USA shortly and it is expected to be more severe than the Canadian one.

The regulations go into effect on December 31st.

For Theatre Requirements

CONTRACT SALES OFFICE

PHONE TR. 1257
6TH FLOOR

EATON'S College Street

BANG! "GIRL CRAZY" THANKSGIVING JOY!
BANG! 10-THEATRE N.Y. PREMIERE FOR "CROSS OF LORRAINE"
BANG! SAY HAPPY NEW YEAR WITH "THOUSANDS CHEER"
BANG! FIRST PREVIEW OF "MADAME CURIE" SENSATIONAL!
BANG! "LASSIE COME HOME"
BANG! "SALUTE TO THE MARINES"
BANG! "SWING SHIFT MAISIE"
BANG! "CRY HAVOC" SENSATIONAL ASTOR, N.Y. WORLD PREMIERE!
M G M
RECORD PACKIN' PAPA!
HITS! HITS! HITS!

Do You Remember Billee Smith?

A Canadian Visitor in England Chanced On An Old Friend of Many of Our Showmen And Wrote This Interesting Article

IT IS said that the sun never sets on the British Empire and the same may be applied to that large but none-the-less select group who comprise "show business." If through circumstances one retires from the business, his heart is still with it and the memories are so strong that they stay with him for the balance of his life. Probably he has saved scrap books which he looks at now and again in order to bring back vividly the grand old days.

Such a man is William C. Smith, now proprietor of the smartest little pub and hotel in Southern England. Called the Rydal Hotel and situated in New Milton, Hampshire, it is hidden behind a high hedge but once inside the hospitality is of the same quality as one finds in a Canadian theatre.

And Billee (correct) Smith is just the one who would know about that. He was a Canadian showman many years ago and knew the film business in Canada from end to end, although more particularly in the Maritimes. Formerly on the stage at St. John, N.B., before the last war, he became one of the most aggressive exhibitors and exchange managers the city ever knew. That was during the last war. Proudly displayed in his pub are framed letters from people still widely known in the business. And in his voluminous scrap books are many echoes of the past.

Though Smith left St. John for San Francisco in 1918, he still has many memories of his Canadian show days. One of the first persons he asked for when I met him was Archie Mason, of the Capitol, Springhill, and now mayor of that place. With Mason, then at the Imperial, St. John, Smith, who was managing the Empress, worked out many improvements in the presentation of films and bands.

SMITH wanted to know about Joe Leiberman and Mitch Bernstein, now of the B. & L. circuit, and A. Garson, who owns the Garrick in Halifax, the Kent in Moncton and other houses. Young Garson, Smith said, was really more responsible than anyone else for his going into the film game. Tom Daley came to his mind. He wanted to know what Daley, now manager of the Imperial, Toronto, was doing and he recalled that Tom, then operator at the Casino, Halifax, sported a large moustache. (Ed. note—Daley, upon being made aware of Smith's recollections, immediately sent him a gift subscription to Film Weekly and said that he still had in his posssesion a contract with the former, which called for the latter to act as operator and janitor of the Empress Theatre for $25 per week.) Smith recalled N. W. Mason of New Glasgow, Canada's oldest active theatre man; Lou Rosenfeld, who had been manager of Famous Players Film Service and had left St. John for Toronto in December, 1916; Joe Franklyn, who was manager of the Strand, Halifax; and Myer Herschorn of the Imperial.

A letter still in Smith's possession is from the General Film Company of Canada. Written in 1918, it suggests that Smith could get $125 for two programs in Halifax, at the same time offering them to Smith for his houses at $35 for an extra week. In the letter there was a warning: "Now I want you to be very careful and if you should play any of this stuff in Nova Scotia, to see that it is censored. The boys are after us and they would like to get us into a corner."

A TIMELY item in Smith's collection is from the St. John Standard of January 29, 1916. It tells that Maritime exhibitors hastened to Ottawa when the report came from the fuel controller that Canadian theatres might be closed for three days each week to save coal. A hurried meeting was called. Present among others were Alice Fairweather, R. G. March (now Fox manager in St. John), and Smith. The theatres were not closed, morale being the deciding factor.

Another event of those days was the joint meeting of exchange managers and exhibitors to settle problems. Among those present were I. Soskin of Famous Players Film Service, W. O. Fenerty of Fredericton, Mason of New Glasgow and Mrs. Davidson of Moncton. Chief argument was over the condition of prints, each group blaming the other. There was a move on foot to move exchange headquarters to Truro, N.S., because 75 per cent of business was done in Nova Scotia. It never materialized.

Clippings show Smith's problem with a local clergyman who in 1917 condemned pictures as immoral. At the time the Empress was playing Baby Marie Osborne, the Baby Bernhardt in a human interest gem, "When Baby Forgot," a Pathe five-part photoplay. Pearl White in "The Fatal Ring" was also on the program and prices had been raised from five to ten cents. The clergyman was invited publicly to awaken from his 13th Century nightmare and witness a production which proves him a fool or a knave. Strong words but Smith seems to have won.

AND now for some of Smith's show ads:

"'In the Days of the Thundering Herd' . . . owing to the high rental we will have to charge ten cents to all parts . . . and due to its length (five reels) we can only show two performances instead of the usual three."

"Theda Bara in 'Under Two Flags' . . . wounded soldiers and sailors admitted free at any time. . . . I am doing you no favor — on the contrary you are honoring me with your company."

"'Rose of the Rancho' in five acts and 480 scenes . . . coming—'The Goose Girl' and Lottie Pickford in Chapter 23 of 'The Diamond in the Sky' . . . Clara Kimball Young in 'My Official Wife' . . . 'The Fortune Hunter,' with Ethel Clayton, a six-reel feature—despite the fact that the show will last an hour and a half there will be no extra charge, just five cents. . . . Charlie Chaplin, Mack Sennett Fatty Arbuckle and Mabel Normand in 'The Sea Nymph' . . . 'Ten Nights in a Barroom,' day and date in three St. John houses . . . 'Tillie's Punctured Romance,' 6000 feet of film for ten cents in the evening and five cents in the afternoon."

And so on.

DESPITE his advancing years Smith is still enthusiastic about the business and continues his interest, though he is doing very well. He would love to hear from any of the lads in Canada who still remember him—and I suspect they are legion.

So don't forget to write him.

Aiken Takes Over At Odeon, Sarnia

George E. Aiken, former manager of the Biltmore Theatre, Kingston, Ontario, recently took over the management of the Odeon Theatre, Sarnia, from W. J. Fawcett who had been acting manager for several weeks. Fawcett returns to Belleville where he is manager of the McCarthy Theatre.

"I SEE bright things ahead for the postwar theatre . . .

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Nathanson Will Is Probated

(Continued from Page 1)

883.83 in real estate, $159,193.42 insurance, $50,159.68 cash and personal effects valued at $3,167,970.79.

The will provides charitable bequests totalling $45,000, gifts to employees of $22,500 and to brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces, a total of $168,000.

Trust funds have been established to provide a life interest in the estate for the widow, two daughters, Mrs. Jean Levin and Johan Nathanson, and the son, Paul.

Bequests of $5,000 each are made to the Hospital for Sick Children, Gravenhurst Sanatorium for Consumptives, Queen Mary hospital for children, Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, Holy Blossom synagogue, Jewish Orphans' home, Toronto Jewish hospital and Toronto Western hospital.

The three employees who benefit by receiving $7,500 each are Mr. Nathanson's chauffeur, nurse and secretary.

Mr. Nathanson's personal effects are bequeathed to his widow, and the residue of the estate is divided equally among the widow and the three children.

Delaney in Town

Flying Officer James Delaney just passed his administration course and is now stationed at No. 3 RCAF, Arnprior, Ont.

20th Century-Fox Has Seven New Short Subs

Titles and the release dates of seven more short subjects were announced by Tom Connors, Vice-president in charge of world-wide distribution of 20th Century-Fox Film Corporation. This does not include three March of Time releases, all untitled as yet, two of which will be released in December and one next January. The seven short subjects will be released during the months of December and January.

On the list are "Kingdom of Treasure," one of the Magic Carpet series, narrated by Lowell Thomas, photographed in Cinecolor, December 3; "Champions Carry On," an Ed Thorgersen Sports subject, December 10; "The Hopeful Donkey," a Terrytoon in Technicolor, December 17; another Magic Carpet film, "A Volcano Is Born," in Technicolor, with Lowell Thomas, as commentator, December 24; "The Butcher of Seville," a Terrytoon in Technicolor, January 7; "The Leathernecks on Parade," one of the Movietone Adventure series, in Technicolor, January 14; "The Helicopter," a Terrytoon in Technicolor, January 21.

Carl Leserman, United Artists general sales manager, and Dave Coplan, UA's Canadian division manager, shown above in friendly confab at the recent New York home office sales meeting.

Warners Announce Six French Pictures

(Continued from Page 1)

Vitagraph, Ltd. will have available for distribution, during the 1943-44 season, at least 16 other French versions of Warner product.

Among the first to be released will be: L'Aigle des Mers (The Sea Hawk); Une Femme Dangereuse (They Drive by Night); La Caravane Heroique (Virginia City); Voyage Sans Espoir ('Till We Meet Again); Le Sergent York; Le Vie Privee d'Elizabeth d'Angleterre (Elizabeth and Essex).

M. Roger Woog, who handled the synchronization of Warner pictures in Paris previous to the war, has personally supervised the switch in sound tracks, using the voices of well-known French actors and actresses, now resident in Hollywood.

"Le Ciel et Toi," originally booked for four days in Quebec, played the full week to establish a new all-time house record, showing to more than 25,000 persons, and topping the previous best gross by over $2,000. The film closed strong on its ninth day.

Dave Seigel Heads Local 173, IATSE

(Continued from Page 1)

Milligan, who held the office for a number of terms.

Bert Higgins, Loew's, was re-elected vice-president. Also returned to office were George H. Jones, Tivoli, secretary-treasurer; Lou Lodge, Jr., Odeon, recording secretary; and William P. Covert, business manager.

The executive, besides those mentioned above, will consist of Harry Dobson, Joseph Youmell, Ed Shields and Carl Wells.

Local 173 is the largest branch of the IATSE in Canada.

Seigel started as a projectionist 29 years ago at the Empress Theatre, Toronto, and is now at the Casino Theatre. He has held no offices since 1936, in which year he was vice-president, but has been active on the wages committee. The new president praised the work of the members of that committee, which was responsible for securing a general raise recently.

The new president enjoys a wide popularity in the trade, particularly with exhibitors.

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of
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Office of the General Counsel
and Chairman of the Board

729 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

November 10, 1943

Dear Mr. Depinet:

I have just seen "Children of Mars" at the local RKO-Keith Theatre. It is the answer to those who said that a picture could not be made on juvenile delinquency that would not do more harm than good. The picture is intelligently made, interesting, and its lesson is inescapable.

I do not know to what extent production of the picture was stimulated by Jack Kirsch's efforts as chairman of Allied's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency, although he advocated the making of just such a picture. Whatever the inspiration, I hope the picture will be widely shown and I imagine the Allied board will have something to say along that line at the Milwaukee meeting.

Yours very truly,

Abram F. Myers

Mr. Ned E. Depinet,
RKO-Radio Pictures, Inc.,
Radio City,
New York, N.Y.